

Hazrat Maulana Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani Sahab (May Allah Ta'ala protect and preserve him),
Vice President Darul Uloom Karachi

Memories

(Episode 25)

Performance of Obligatory Hajj with My Respected Father

Allah Ta'ala had made such arrangements for performing Umrah that not much expenditure was required for it. However, I did not possess enough wealth to perform Hajj. But Allah Ta'ala made extraordinary arrangements for that as well. Our respected father (may his secret be sanctified) had a special taste for visiting the Haramain Shareefain, but for the Hajj of 1383H (equivalent to 1964) he was reluctant, because he had to fulfill some necessary *Deeni* tasks in Pakistan itself. Our brother-in-law, Hazrat Maulana Nur Ahmad Sahab (may Allah's mercy be upon him) (who was also the Coordinator of Darul Uloom), brought to our respected father's attention: "You often feel that there are several matters in the Muslim world, and especially in the Hijaz, that need correction and towards which it is needed to direct the attention of the scholars as well as those in authority. Since scholars and spiritual leaders will gather at Hajj, if you were to go for Hajj you will also get an opportunity to accomplish this task. Since our respected father also felt the need to make all efforts possible to bring this plan to fruition, he decided to perform Hajj together with Hazrat Maulana Nur Ahmad Sahab. He also wrote brief reminisces of this journey. Among them was the following:

"When the thought of accomplishing this objective together with Hajj came to mind, it felt necessary to have two teachers of Darul Uloom, my sons Maulvi Muhammad Rafi and Maulvi Muhammad Taqi (may Allah keep them both safe) as my companions, because they are quite capable in expressing themselves in spoken and written Arabic. Also, in view of my old age, there was expectation of much support from them in terms of settling the necessities of travel."

Despite perceiving this need, we did not possess enough wealth to perform Hajj on our own expenditure. But within a few days, Hazrat Maulana Nur Ahmad Sahab told that in view of supporting our respected father to accomplish the above-mentioned objective, a friend of his wished to send two persons for Hajj on his own expenditure, and that this would be a good opportunity for me and my elder brother Hazrat Maulana Mufti Muhammad Rafi Usmani Sahab (may His shade be extended) to go for Hajj. We were already keen to perform Hajj, and on top of that was the blessing of performing this blessed journey in the companionship of our respected father (may his secret be sanctified). We thus eagerly began procedures. But since our names were not included in the ballot, there were hurdles upon hurdles. Besides those obstacles, there was only one way to go for Hajj if one did not participate in the ballot, which was through buying a Bonus Voucher. But the cost of this was higher than the normal method (meaning approximately three thousand rupees, which was a hefty sum in those times). Time went by in fulfilling governmental processes, until it was time for our respected father and Maulana Nur

Ahmad Sahab to depart. And they departed in the hope that our procedures would be completed in two or three days, and we would join them thereafter. Hazrat Maulana Nur Ahmad Sahab had also passed to us the address of the person who wished to sponsor our Hajj, so that when the time came to pay, he could be contacted. Therefore when we were done with all the procedures, we contacted that person. But he suddenly (perhaps due to some dire necessity) excused himself. We were thunderstruck when we heard this apology. We did not possess enough wealth to take advantage of this opportunity by paying for it ourselves. On the other hand, we had struggled for weeks to get this opportunity and losing it was very painful. Some people suggested to get a loan from some acquaintances of our respected father (may Allah's mercy be upon him), but Allah Ta'ala had saved from asking anyone for a loan the entire life. (The decision to perform Hajj on someone else's sponsorship had been made without any inducement whatsoever from our side, and the desire to sponsor us had also been initiated by him). Finally, the heart decided that there were no valid grounds to ask anyone for a loan to perform Hajj, so we put off our intentions for some other year. Perhaps only a few hours had passed when a student of Darul Uloom, the late Maulvi Muhammad Ali Sahab, came to meet us. He was a single man without any dependents, and had left his government job to attain knowledge of Deen. In an earnest, imploring tone he said: "I have come with a request. Please do not reject it. My request is that I have some left-over money from the days I used to work, which is lying idle. I am a single man and will not need it for years to come. It is my heartfelt desire that this money, or a part thereof, is used in your Hajj. I know that you would not take it if I present it as a gift. So I would like to present it with the request that I have no urgency for its return. I would consider it a blessing for myself if this amount is used for your Hajj with your respected father."

He made this offer in such a manner that rejecting it felt like ingratitude to Allah Ta'ala. We thus accepted this offer with the intention that InshaAllah we will reduce our other necessary expenditures and try to repay it as soon as possible. And Allah Ta'ala so made it happen; a year had not elapsed after Hajj that arrangements for repayment of the debt were made, and we returned the money to him. But his deepfelt emotions had such an impact on me that heartfelt supplications for him pour out from the bottom of the heart. Now he has returned to Allah Ta'ala. May Allah Ta'ala grant him the best recompense for this good deed, and bestow on him a high station in Jannat ul-Firdaus. Ameen.

The flight we had originally intended to take had already flown. Only the last flight was left. It was quite difficult to get a seat in it, but with the grace and favour of Allah Ta'ala we were able to get it and landed in Makkah Mukarramah on the 7th of Dhul Hijjah. Our respected father (may Allah's mercy be upon him), having waited for us for so long, had all but lost hope. He used to perform Hajj through the late Mu'allim Shakir Sikandar Sahab, who had also helped us a lot during our Umrah. We thus headed for his office straight after Asar, where a heap of luggages of Hajis lay cluttered around, and behind it in a corner was our respected father (may Allah's mercy be upon him), with a *lota* in hand preparing for Wudu (ablution). His delight was worth seeing when we appeared out of the blue. His blessed face beaming with jubilation is still fresh in my mind, and the heart feels the pleasure of that meeting even today. We came to know that our respected father was staying in this very office of the Mu'allim, where the Hajis' belongings were cluttered around and where people kept coming and going all the time.

He had such an ascetic temperament that besides the desire to visit the Haramain Shareefain he did not pay much attention to having good arrangements for food and accommodation. He was the beloved of many, and if he so wished he could have got much better accommodation. But the time of Hajj was near, and in lieu of investing time in finding a better accommodation, he preferred to spend it in the *Haram* instead. Perhaps this was the reason that he did not even inform others about his arrival. But we strongly felt that staying in such a place at this advanced age was detrimental to his health. However, we were to depart for Mina the next morning and did not have enough time to find a suitable place. We therefore spent the night in the same place and left for Mina the next morning. And Alhamdulillah we were blessed with performing the rites of Hajj under the guidance of our respected father.

This was in April and the weather in Makkah Mukarramah was quite pleasant. Our respected father (may his secret be sanctified) was also feeling so refreshed and high-spirited that we would have hardly seen him as such. Thus, each and every moment spent with him on this journey of Hajj proved to be a treasure-trove of memorable blessings. He would inundate us with exquisite jewels of knowledge and *ma'rifah* (gnosis) at each and every step. I was teaching *Deewan Hamasa* in Darul Uloom in those days, so its poems were fresh in my memory to a good extent. But on this occasion I realized that our respected father (may his secret be sanctified) had memorized poetry of the Age of Ignorance (pre-Islamic times) as well as post-Islamic times to a much greater extent than that. He would benefit us by quoting couplets pertinent to the situation from time to time. Two of our teachers, Hazrat Maulana Akbar Ali Sahab and Hazrat Maulana Sehban Mahmood Sahab, were also performing Hajj that year. The way Hazrat Maulana Sehban Mahmood Sahab served Hazrat Maulana Akbar Ali Sahab, as well as his own father, had a deeply profound impact on my heart.

After Isha on 11th Dhul Hijjah, our respected father was invited to a dinner hosted by the Pakistan Embassy. But before that he went to visit Shaykhul Hadith Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Zakariyya Sahab Saharanpuri, Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Yusuf Sahab the Ameer of the Tablighi Jamat, and Hazrat Maulana Qari Muhammad Tayyib Sahab (may Allah's mercy be upon them all), who were all staying in a house near *Jamara al-Oola*. According to the reminiscences of this journey that our respected father had penned down, at this meeting Hazrat Shaykhul Hadith Sahab (may Allah's mercy be upon him) said that the famous ruling of the Maliki Madhhab that doing *Qasr* (shortening the prayers) in Mina, etc. is a part of the *manasik* (rites) of Hajj and hence it is also *wajib* (compulsory) on a *muqem* (non-traveler), the real reason for this is that according to them, when a resident of Makkah Mukarramah departs for Hajj, the total combined distance traversed when travelling to Mina, Arafat, Muzdalifa, and then the return journey, exceeds the distance required to be travelled to be considered a *musafir* (traveler). Here the combined distance is considered because the *Haji* cannot stop his journey at any place on his own will, rather he has to travel this entire distance. This is different as compared to other travelers, because they can stop their journey anywhere they wish, so for them the combined distance of going and returning is not considered.¹

¹ This issue needs investigation:

We offered Isha prayer in Masjid Khaif, where Hazrat Qari Fateh Muhammad Sahab (may Allah's mercy be upon him) was also staying. We visited him, and thereafter we attended an invitation of the Ambassador of Pakistan, Abdul Fattah Memon Sahab, in which he had gathered together eminent dignitaries from the Muslim world. Here the Prime Minister of Nigeria Bello Sahab, in his speech, criticized the calls for Arab unity made by Egypt's General Nasser, and stressed on the unity of the Muslim world. In this strain, he also persuasively addressed the issue of freedom of the people of Palestine and Zanzibar, and also Kashmir. In his reminiscences, our respected father has written that after him the Ambassador of Syria also emphasized on Muslim unity. Thereafter the head of the Arab delegation delivered a speech, and he also addressed the need for unity of the entire Muslim world, and also talked about the Kashmir dispute. At the end, the Grand Mufti of Palestine Sayyid Ameen Husaini delivered an elaborate speech in which he powerfully addressed the Kashmir dispute.

On the 12th of Dhul Hijjah, we boarded a bus on our return from Mina which, instead of dropping us in the Haram, dropped us somewhere else. After alighting we learnt that that place was *Muhassab*, where the noble messenger (peace be upon him) had rested for a while after returning from Mina. Though the stay here is not part of the rites of Hajj according to most scholars, we anyway received the blessing, though unintentionally, of staying where the noble messenger (peace be upon him) had stayed. A Masjid had been built here in the Turkish era. We prayed Maghrib in that Masjid and after Maghrib our respected father rested for a while. Thereafter we began walking towards Makkah Mukarramah. This was a distance of almost two miles. Our respected father was quite exhausted by the time we reached Makkah Mukarramah, and did not have the energy to continue walking to our accommodation (the house of Shakir Sikandar Sahab). He therefore decided to spend the night in the Haram Sharif itself. We brought our beddings, pillows and bedsheets from our accommodation, and some food in a bowl as well. Thereafter the night was spent on one side of the Haram Sharif.

The next day was spent trying to find an appropriate accommodation for our respected father, because it was difficult to permanently stay at Shakir Sikandar Sahab's place due to the constant crowd and noise in his office. At long last, through an acquaintance of our respected father's, we found a room at a reasonable rate in a moderate hotel named As-Surrati Hotel at Ajyad Road. We thus moved to this room

البيان والتحصيل (٢/ ٥٦) سئل ابن القاسم عن أهل مني هل يقصرون إذا أرادوا الإفاضة ، أو أهل عرفة؟ فقال: أما أهل عرفة فيقصرون ولا يقصر أهل مني ، قال ابن القاسم: وكل من كان بمنى يقصر ، فإذا أفاض قصر ، وكل من كان بمنى يتم ، فإذا أفاض أتم. قال محمد بن رشد : قوله في الحاج من أهل مني أنهم لا يقصرون في إفاضتهم من منى إلى مكة صحيح ، لقرب ما بين منى ومكة ، وقوله في أهل عرفة : أنهم يقصرون في إفاضتهم من منى إلى مكة صحيح أيضاً ، علي قياس قوله إنهم يقصرون بمنى ، لأنهم إذا كانوا يقصرون بمنى فهم علي ذلك يرجعون إلى وطنهم بعرفة. وفي قوله إنهم يقصرون بمنى نظر ، لأنه إنما قال إنهم يقصرون بها قياساً علي تقصير الحاج من أهل مكة بها ، وذلك إنما فيه الإتيان لرسول الله ﷺ في تقصيره بها ، ولا يتعدي بالسنة موضعها . إذا لم تكن موافقة للأصول ، لا سيما وقد قيل إن رسول الله ﷺ لم يكن مقيماً بمكة ، ولذلك قصر بمنى. و إلى ذلك ذهب أهل العراق ، فلم يجيزوا للحاج من أهل مكة التقصير بمنى وعرفة ، وقد مضى هذا في رسم شك في طوافه من سماع ابن القاسم . وقول ابن القاسم وكل من كان بمنى يقصر ، فإذا أفاض قصر ، مثل قوله أولاً أما أهل عرفة فيقصرون ، لأن أهل عرفة يقصرون عنده بمنى ، على ما تقدم. و وقع في بعض الروايات : وكل من كان بعرفة يقصر ، فإذا أفاض قصر . وهو غلط ، لأن قوله يتناقض بذلك ، من أجل أن أهل منى يقصرون بمنى ، وهو قد قال أنهم يتمون إذا أفاضوا.

together with our respected father. But this room was situated on the fourth floor and the lift was out of order. We spent two days here and thereafter stayed in Khouqeer Hotel near Bab al-Umrah for two days. By then the lift in Surrati Hotel had been repaired, so we moved back and remained there until 2nd of Muharram.

Hazrat Shaikh Hasan al-Mashaat (may Allah's mercy be upon him), from whom I had received *Ijazah* in Hadith and also got the blessing of attending his lectures, was still teaching in the sacred Haram. I presented myself in his service, and our respected father was also happy to meet him. Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Rafi Usmani Sahab (may his shade be extended) obtained *Ijazah* of Hadith from him, and Hazrat Shaikh Mashaat obtained *Ijazah* of Hadith from our respected father.

Since only ten months had elapsed since my previous Umrah, the sites of the Haramin Shareefain were quite fresh in my memory. I would readily go to those sites with my elder brother Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Rafi Usmani Sahab (may his shade be extended). But I had not got the opportunity to visit the Cave of Thawr during my previous visit. After returning from Hajj, we made a plan to visit it during our stay in Makkah Mukarramah. We thought we would leave after *Ishraq* (sunrise) so that we can return by Zuhr and get *Jamat* (congregational prayer) in the Haram. Besides us two brothers, an eleven-member caravan comprising of Hazrat Maulana Sehban Mahmood and Hazrat Maulana Nur Ahmad Sahab (may Allah's mercy be upon them both), and some more people got ready, and soon we reached the foot of Mount Thawr. The mountain before us did not seem too tall, but when we climbed it we realized that ahead is another mountain which is even higher than the first one. Infused with zeal and eagerness, we proceeded and began climbing it. When we reached its summit, we realized that we need to climb another peak. From what I remember, it took us two to two-and-a-half hours to finally reach Mount Thawr. But our jubilation knew no bounds when we finally reached the opening of the Cave of Thawr. This cave is actually a huge stone placed on top of the mountain, which is hollow from the inside and enclosed from all around. It has only a hole at its bottom, from which it is possible to enter by crawling through while lying down. This is the very opening over which a spider had spun its web while the noble messenger (peace be upon him) was hiding inside. This opening was open when we reached, so we crawled in one by one. Inside, a curious sight unfolded before us; two stone slabs lay side by side, each long enough for one person to lie on it. But one of the slabs was slightly higher than the other, as if Allah Ta'ala had naturally allocated places to lie down for the leader of the world (peace be upon him) and his Companion of the Cave (may Allah be pleased with him) which respects the difference in their statures. After the House of Allah, this was the second piece of land about which we knew for certain that it had received the blessing of being touched by the blessed body of the leader of the world (peace be upon him), and which had remained intact until now. Here the two most superior souls of the *Ummah* spent three days and three nights in hiding. What has come in narrations, that the enemies had reached the opening of the cave in his (peace be upon him) search, and Hazrat Siddiq al-Akbar (may Allah be pleased with him) submitted to the sacred messenger (peace be upon him) that if the enemies were to just look at their feet they would see us; the true meaning of this became clear when we reached here inside the cave. This is because the opening of the cave is very low, touching the ground, and anyone outside can only see inside the cave if he were to bend down to look at his feet. It was on

this occasion that the noble messenger (peace be upon him) replied with the words which the noble Quran has related:

لَا تَحْزَنُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَنَا (Surah at-Tawba: 40)

“Do not grief. Allah is surely with us.”

And it occurs in the narration of Hazrat Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) that he (peace be upon him) also said:

مَا ظَنُّكَ بِاِثْنَيْنِ اللَّهُ ثَالِثُهُمَا

“What do you think of those two whose third is Allah himself.”

Millions of *salaams* (greetings of peace) be upon that pure soul who, despite finding his blood-thirsty enemies so near, remained an embodiment of calmness and tranquility, and trust on his Lord. Allah the Blessed and Most High had pre-arranged for a spider to spin a web at the opening of the cave, so the pursuers left after seeing this web.

After remaining lost visualizing scenes from history for some time, we began our return journey. Walking downhill took less time than climbing up; while the ascent took us more than two hours, we reached the foot of the mountain in around 45 minutes. The excitement of the journey had numbed our bodies to fatigue, but when we reached home several companions caught fever and the shoes of several had torn apart; everyone suffered from severe exhaustion at the very least. This made me remember that Hazrat Abdur Rahman Bin Abi Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) would gather information about the daily plots of the enemies of the noble messenger (peace be upon him) all day long, and then come to Cave of Thawr after Isha. He would brief the noble messenger (peace be upon him), spend the night with him and thereafter return to Makkah Mukarramah before daybreak. Similarly, Hazrat Amir Bin Fuhayrah would visit there with a herd of goats. May Allah Ta’ala be pleased with them all.

Our Respect Father’s Meeting with Saudi Scholars and His Letter of Appeal to Them

For a long time, our respected father (may Allah’s mercy be upon him) used to feel that the influential scholars in Najd and Hijaz emphasized upon secondary *Fiqhi* (jurisprudential) and doctrinal issues more than needed, and were not paying enough attention to the wrongdoings subtly permeating this sacred land under the influence of Western thought. Therefore one of the objectives of this trip was to meet certain influential scholars and to direct their attention to this matter. To this end he wrote a letter, in the drafting of which he gave me some share as well. Hazrat Shaykh Abdul Fattah Abu Ghuddah (may Allah’s mercy be upon him) had also come for Hajj that year, and our respected father wanted to get this letter reviewed by him as well. He thus sent a message to him to meet under the *Meezab-e-Rahmat* after Maghrib. When the time approached, our respected father sent me to search for him. When I reached there I could not find him, but I saw a group of Syrian scholars. When I enquired from them about Shaykh, I became acquainted with them. The leader of their gathering was Shaikh Taiseer Makhzoomi, who met very kindly and became very pleased when I told him about our respected father. He thereafter went to our respected father to meet him and said:

شبلکم جال جولۃ لطلب الشیخ عبد الفتاح ، ولم یجده ، فصادنا صیدا ، فہا أنا بمحضرکم

(Your son made a round in search of Shaykh Abdul Fattah but could not find him, so he caught us and brought us to you. We are thus present before you.)

Shaykh Taiseer was a very good-natured and good-humoured scholar. Our respected father became very happy to meet him. He also requested our respected father to grant him *Ijazah* in Hadith and, during the conversation, mentioned that he belonged to the Banu Makhzoom tribe. Pointing to Mount Safa, he explained that his family once lived there. Our respected father said: “But now you must be saying:

كان لم یکن بین الحجون إلا الصفا

أنیس ، ولم یسمر بمکة سامر¹

Shaikh Taiseer enjoyed this very pertinent couplet a lot, and thereafter remained with us until Isha, discussing various scholarly topics. After Isha, we met Shaikh Abdul Fattah as well and scheduled a meeting for the next day’s morning, in which the draft letter was finalized together with him. Hazrat Maulana Sehban Mahmood Sahab, whose Arabic handwriting was so beautiful that his written words appeared as if they were pearls decorated on paper, created a copy of the letter. It was mainly addressed to the then-Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia, Shaikh Muhammad Bin Ibrahim (may Allah’s mercy be upon him), and through him to other scholars. Thereafter after Maghrib on 23rd Dhul Hijjah we went to meet the Grand Mufti at his residence in Shisha. We met his son there, who was also the Chief Justice. His brother Shaikh Abdul Malik Bin Ibrahim, who was the President of the *Commission for the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice*, also came, and Muhammad Ahmad Bashumaill, the author of the famous book “al-Qawmiyyah Fee Nazar il-Islam” was also present. We discussed the issues facing the Muslim world with them, but for some reason the Grand Mufti could not come at the time. We thus presented the letter to his son, to present it to him, which he promised to do so. On 24th Dhul Hijjah, through Shaikh Abdul Hameed Farsi Sahab, our respected father sent me to get the letter typed in the office of the monthly “Al-Hajj” magazine, where a typed version was drafted. We were scheduled to meet Shaikh Abdul Malik Bin Ibrahim, the President of the *Commission for the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice*,. He met us warmly and told us that the letter sent to the Grand Mufti yesterday was diligently read in our presence. We all consider it a beneficial effort, and the Grand Mufti will send a reply to it as well. Our respected father gifted his work on Hadith “*Al-Izdiyyad us-Sunnee*” to him. He thoroughly enjoyed reading the Arabic couplets of our respect father at its end, and also presented five copies of Shaikh Ibn Daqeeq al-Eid’s (may Allah’s mercy be upon him) book “*al-Ilmam*”, which he himself had got published.

¹ This is a famous Arabic couplet. Some people from the progeny of Hazrat Ismail (peace be upon him) had to leave Makkah Mukarramah due to some adversaries. Thereafter one of them somehow covertly made it to Mount Safa and gazed upon the valley of Makkah Mukarramah, on one side of which was Mount Safa and on the other Mount Hajoon. At that point he recited this couplet, which means that now it seems as if no acquaintance of mine had ever lived anywhere between Mount Hajoon and Mount Safa, and neither had I ever conversed with anyone in the moonlit nights of Makkah.